

INSIDE: GODZILLA vs SPACE GODZILLA



SENTAI

THE JOURNAL OF ASIAN S/F AND FANTASY

SPECIAL **GUYVER** **ISSUE**

PLUS AN
INTERVIEW WITH
DIRECTOR OF
"THE GUYVER"
STEVE WANG

ALL NEW
GAMERA
FILM FOR
1995

TOHO
GODZILLA
RETROSPECTIVE

PLUS:
NEWS, REVIEWS,
LETTERS



The New Guy Speaks



Permit me if I'm a bit wacky at this—it's been a while since I had to wear an editorial. I'm dropping the costume of my brain, there's something, it's not quite close... oh, yes, a short sentence, that's how you're supposed to start these things off.

The editorial marks a major change that's been a long time coming, both for me as an individual and for the Antarctic Press as a company. I've been a part of this organization as one way or another for almost a year now, and an active member of the editorial staff for five. Most of that time has been spent on the peripheries of the company, taking away from my remote location in Dallas, receiving occasional dispatches from the main office, sending in alterations of stories for Magazine, but basically isolated. At times my modest existence put great strain on me, and the people here at the AP headquarters would referring to me as "Nerd".

Seriously, about two months ago, Joe and Ben Davis and I came to the conclusion that the time was finally right for a big step. The company has needed a single editorial authority for some time now. Our growth over those last two years has been phenomenal, and has outstripped Ben's ability to juggle all his responsibilities as publisher, editor and, of course, creator of *Ninja High School*.

High School and other projects. Many of these stories, dealing with distributors, printers, artists, constantly had files on him simply because there was no one else to perform them. So to avoid having Ben add even a high blood pressure, stress and hair loss to the roster: "health care crises," it was decided that I should move to San Antonio and take much of the load off his back. So here I am as the new Editor in Chief for the Antarctic Press.

I think Ben has done a great job getting this company where it is today (note: while I'm now Editor in Chief, Ben retains his position as Chief Target of Bites-N-Bites), and I hope that I can fill his shoes. I appreciate the confidence he and Joe have placed in me.

Moody. I appreciate the chance to help bring you, the reader, a broad variety of entertaining content. We have some big plans in store, and I'm glad to be a part of them.

Sincerely,

Herb Mullins

Herb Mullins
New High Grand Poobah
Mystery Meat Big Cheese
Deputy For Life and
Editor in Chief

Check out ANTARCTIC PRESS
editorial dept.

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The Not So New Guy Says Stuff



For all of you joining on late, the offices of AP have been hammering with terrorist activity as the staff takes deep into the night on our new secret project. I still can't tell you much about it, but I can tell you the name: *Mythos*. Our over-the-top editors and their eager artists are fleshing out concepts, writing story lines, creating all new cover designs and layouts. *Mythos* is going to be as all new approach to comics by the Antarctic Press, and we're not opening any eyes! Look for the upcoming title in future AP books!

School Yearbook is once again taking more submissions! Anything in the genres FHS receives is fair game! Try to keep your stories under eight pages though, and send photocopies for approval before you send your original art! The deadline for submissions is September 1st, so get cracking! By the way, it's not too early to consider your submissions for Circle of NHS. The deadline for CoNHS is March 1st!

Con Report. Project A-Kan was a blast! On one of my panels, we had a stack period of some future titles and the response was over the top! I'm glad to hear your feedback and comments are being available, especially on our computer column. Count on its being here again next year!

The Gold Digger Strike is back, contest drawing was held at King Arthur's Comics in Texas. Fred Perry, creator of Gold Digger, was in

hand to personally draw the winning entry. Prizes included an ounce of pure gold, as well as other neat stuff like art and art, subscriptions and signed editions of Gold Digger. A big thanks to all the artists who appeared with Fred in the signing including: (right) Adam Warren (of *Rebellion*), Chris and Terry (of *Star Wars*), the delightful Terry Moore (drawing in *Paradise*), the over-the-top: Ted Pinnau (Tiger of Terra), the enigmatic Joe Wright (Tiger of Terra), the Over-the-top: Bobby Phillips & Joe Williams (Zorro), (left and right) Ben Davis, Robert "Black Bird" Johnson (Small Busted Ninja High School). Unfortunately, I can't print the names of the winners and I'd be all too soon notified, so look for a complete list of winners next month!

Herb Mullins

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SENTAI

THE JOURNAL OF ASIAN S/F AND FANTASY

Number Three
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July, 1994

Well, another issue of Sento! is in the can.

I hope you like this issue (because it took me a long time to get it together). Just kidding.

A lot is going on with SENTA!. So much mail has come in that I can no longer answer the mail personally and put the magazine together. Therefore, I've allowed my assistant editor, Doug Din, to answer the mail. Doug is very knowledgeable in the area of live-action shows and will fill in very nice, I think.

I am considering a format change for the magazine. One of the changes I would like to add is the addition of more color. It's awfully frustrating to show these great sentai costumes and not being able to show you how colorful they are. Of course, color is more expensive, so now I am at a quandary: Should I continue in black and white and keep the cost low or add color and raise the cover price a little. I would like to hear from you as to what you think I should do.

With the success of **POWER RANGERS** (no matter what you personally may think) the door is now open for a slew of sentai-type shows to arrive. Whether that is good or bad is a matter of opinion.

Personally, I am happy that sentai is finally getting its due. I've long wanted to see it succeed and it is happening. However, I'm not sure I like the "Americanization" of these shows. Call me a pervert, but I like the uncensored versions. Oh, well.

Finally some plugs: Check out **G-FAN**. It's a must for any live-action fan (especially Godzilla fans) and features great art by my bud, Paul Roche. Also check the ads for **Toy Masters** and **Club Del Rei** in the back if you want to get some cool stuff.

Until next time.

Ben Dunn

Cover by Jimmy Reyes

Colors by Ben Dunn

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STEVE WANG

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SENTAI NEWS

GODZILLA vs SPACE GODZILLA TO HIT JAPAN THIS DECEMBER!

Tokyo, Japan-
GODZILLA'S NEW
FOR OFFICIALLY
REVEALED

Special thanks to
Akifuro Ikeda & Paul
Roche



As a production announcement about Godzilla's latest movie, *Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla* (Director: Takashi Yamashita), conducted at Toho's Seto studios in Tokyo on June 7th, *Space Godzilla*, the latest "bad guy" monster in the Godzilla series, was officially introduced for the first time. *Space Godzilla* is a crystalline lifeform that originates from cells from Godzilla that evolve after being scattered out in space. This will be Godzilla's biggest enemy ever, twenty meters taller and twenty thousand tons heavier than the mighty leviathan itself, and a fierce battle is sure to be the result. Also appearing in the film will be Mogera, the monster from Toho's first space fiction film, *Earth Defense Force* (1957) (U.S. title: *The Mysterious*), on screen again for the first time in thirty-seven years. It has been brought back as the multi-unit machine MOGERA, short for Mobile Operations Godzilla Expert Robot, Aerial-type.

Rumors are that the story is about a Godzilla-type monster created in space by cells from the original Godzilla that came from the claws of Mothra as seen in *GODZILLA vs. MOTHRA*. Another possible storyline is that this new "Space Godzilla" was an alien life form that combines with the Biollante spores as seen in *GODZILLA vs. BIOLLANTE*. G-Force attempt to re-build Mecha-Godzilla (that was destroyed in the last film) but they fail so they build Mogera instead. Other parts of the story involve an island where baby Godzilla where it has grown to 40 meters and shows telekinetic power with *Space Godzilla*. The final battle is supposed to take place in Fukushima. Also Mogera is to fight *Space Godzilla* in outer space.

Special Effects Director Kôichi Kawasaka, for who has handled the special effects for the past four Godzilla films, showed his self-confidence by stating, "I want to make a film that involves a lot of digital composition and such, building upon the special effects techniques cultivated in the previous four films." The movie is scheduled for completion in early November, and will be released on December 10.



Space Godzilla



Mogera



SENTAI NEWS

FILM LOST 8 YEARS AGO DISCOVERED NORTH KOREA'S GODZILLA, "BULLGASARI"



from the 3-26-94 edition of
Sentai Sports
Special thanks to Akifuro Ikeda

The lost film of a monster movie
once made in North Korea (the
Democratic People's Republic of North
Korea), the Japanese release of which

was suddenly canceled, was discovered in Japan after being missing for eight years. Kengocho Sazama (40), the actor who plays
Godzilla, went to North Korea back in 1985 to take part in a location shoot for the live-action film *Bullgasari*, in which he was
starring. When video copies of the film start surfacing in the future, he should become quite the talk of the town.

With the help of Sazama and four Japanese staff members, *Bullgasari* was being made as North Korea's first live-action SF
monster movie. The results received good reviews, to the point where instantanoids and girls arrived for the Shuei-produced film from
President Kim Il Sung. It was released in North Korea and a private screening was held in Japan for the Japanese participants, after
which arrangements for nationwide release in Japan through a major foreign film distributor were almost sealed.

However, on March 16, 1986, after going to North Korea for the filming, the film's South Korean director, Shigeo Shin
(Japanese pronunciation), was re-called to America, and the film's Japanese actors got caught up in the whirlpool of international
politics and swept away. Even so "many fans were eagerly awaiting the release of the story of a heroic monster who drives off the
bad guys" (according to Sazama), the film itself vanished somewhere.

Then, this year, the Japanese participants in the film learned that it had come into the possession of a major monster movie
fanatic and retrieved it. On hearing this, Sazama was quite moved: "I'm so happy. It'd given up hope on the film ever being seen in
Japan. I think it's absolutely great that we've been given an opportunity to show it to the fans."

Bullgasari is the movie version of the legend of an evil-magical monster who appeared at the end of the Edo (Japanese
pronunciation) Dynasty (late 14th Century). Similar in plot to the Coon drama film *Danmaku*, it tells of how *Bullgasari* befriends a
poor young girl and aids with the peasant population against the government soldiers who are abusing them, eventually growing 20
meters tall to chase away the enemy.

Currently, international problems have arisen due to suspicions that North Korea is developing nuclear weapons, but the
movie's location shoots were all taken in either Pyongyang or along the Taedong River, the crew borrowing Secretary Kim Jong Il's
villa for lodging, and were produced to reflect the conditions of the country.

With the discovery of the film in Japan after eight years, the people involved are now planning both theatrical and video releases
for the all the fans.

GAMERA'S BACK! GIANT TURTLE TO STAR IN ALL NEW FILM!

Compiled from 8 Chū-ei vol. 103 and
the 4 26-94 editions of Sports Magazine and Sports News
Special thanks to Akifuro Ikeda

On April 25, official announcements was made at Daiichi Stadium, in
the Chūfu section of Tokyo, of the production of Gamera: *Mutai
Shinkron of the Giant Monsters* (Director: Shōzoku Kameki), the first
new movie in thirteen years about the giant flying turtle, who has
shared the monster-movie spotlight with Godzilla in the eight films
since his "birth" in 1965. The original Daiichi fight between Gamera and
Goos is being revived after 28 years, and the two old enemies will now
be engaging in action-packed battles set in places like Tokyo and
Fukuoka. Among the scenes said to be included in the new film are the
destruction of the Tokyo Tower (a favorite pastime of Japanese giant

(continued on next page)



SENTAI NEWS

(CAMERA'S BACK can't) monster) and an attempt to capture Gao using the Fukuoka Dome, the roof of which can open and shut. Of course, there's also the inevitable high-speed mad-air monster battle from which the movie draws most of its name.

Gamera has been revised to make him a match for the new Technology. The new Gamera is supposed to be 80 meters tall, a full 20 meters taller than the old version, and can fly at speeds up to Mach 3.5. Gamera's "friend of the children" image has also been magnified, now he is to be depicted as a sort of guardian deity for the entire planet. Gao has been been "upgraded", too, made more evil and given a three-stage evolution. No longer just the ultrasonic-screaming monster he once was, Gao is now a nano-made monster, the product of the genetic engineering experiments of an ancient super-civilization.

Cast as the movie's heroine is Ayako Fujitani (14). This film will mark the theatrical debut for Fujitani, whose father is

American action-porn star Steven Segal. Last year was her debut in TV commercials, in an ad for Mitsui Robhouse. Now Miss Fujitani faces the challenge of her vital role as a girl with an empathic link to Gamera. She expressed her feelings and intentions thus: "It's an honor to be so suddenly cast in a big film like this. Gamera may look scary, but he's cute. I'll do the best job I can." Other cast members include Akira Onodera, Takeshi Itara, and Shunzou Nakayama.

The word is she has yet to inform her father, Mr. Segal, of this "movie debut", but, says Miss Fujitani, "I want to tell him as soon as I get a chance." Asked about continuing her acting career, she flashed a smile and replied, "I think people will support me if I say I want to keep acting."

Filming started in June on the movie, which is scheduled for release in March of 1993, with Toho acting as distributor. "We're aiming for an attendance of two million people, with a resulting income of some 1.5 billion yen. We'd like to turn this into a series of movies, and even have a showdown with the 'grand champion' himself, Godzilla," declared Toho president Kikuo Tokuma. Director Kaneko, now in his tenth year of fulfilling his life-long desire to film monster movies, echoed this sentiment: "I want to make the most of Gamera's ability to fly and develop this into a series popular enough to get him a costarring role with Godzilla."

Kaneko brings with him directorial experience from such Japanese films as *Summer Vacation 1999*, *Hong Kong Paradise*, and *I Want to Die*. This year he makes his Hollywood debut with the summer release *Neon Genesis*. Screenplay writer Kazunori Ito has previously worked on such projects as *Mobile Police Paradox*, *Ultraman Powered*, and the aforementioned *Neon Genesis*. The Special Effects Director is Masashi Higuchi, whose list of credits include *Mitsubishi*, *Future Memory*, and *B-Club magazine's Gormo Row*.



SENTAI NEWS

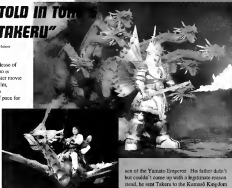
LEGEND RETOLD IN TOKU "YAMATO TAKERU"

compiled from the Japanese "TV" issue of *Uchusen*
and the U.S.-UK edition of *Science Fiction*

Special thanks to Akira Kudo

Not half a year after the release of *Godzilla vs. Mothra*, Toho is putting another live-action monster movie on screen. However, this new film, *Yamato Takeru* (Director: Takao Okawara), is a bit of a change of pace for the studio. A period fantasy piece primarily based on two separate legends, *Yamato Takeru* is the first non-Godzilla monster movie Toho has released in ages.

The basis for the movie's title and half of its concept is the story of Yamato Takeru, who is supposed to have been an actual historical figure, the like him and professionalism dead to have been overtly killed. In an *Kyôdai* to defeat it and bring chaos, Takeru succeeded & returned. The hapless Imperial offspring was then sent to the eastern area of Japan to bring the kingdom



son of the Yamato Emperor. His father didn't but couldn't come up with a legitimate reason stand, he sent Takeru to the Katsuragi Kingdom & under Yamato rule. To the Emperor's

The second half of the movie's concept is part of the legend of Susanoo-oh, a legendary god of war cast out of Heaven for improper behavior. While wandering across Japan, he came across a village terrorized by the Yamato-no-ochi, an eight-headed Hydra (actually Tsukiyomi, elder brother of the sun goddess Amaterasu, changed into a monster by his sister for trying to attack her). He killed the Hydra, saving the village, and on the Hydra's tail he found a sword that was to become one of the three symbols of the Japanese Imperial line (along with the sacred mirror and scepter, or comma-shaped jewels).

Filming for *Yamato Takeru*, to be released on July 9, finished up at Toho's studios in the Sept. subdivision of Tokyo on June 1. The last scene filmed was the one in which Takeru and Oo-tachi-hime have their final battle with the Yamato-no-ochi. The brave duo have to maintain the danger of riding on the four-meter Amazon-shikoro while fighting the beast of the six-meter long, 1,000-kg Yamato-no-ochi, each step a week 3.5 in long.

Main lead Masahiro Takasaka was quite enthusiastic in getting into his role as Yamato Takeru, letting his hair grow for over half a year before filming started to make the character that much more real. After riding out the five-month shooting period, Takasaka seemed quite confident of the quality of the results when he was quoted in a newspaper article as saying, "The action sequences were tough, but the results were pretty good. This'll be my representative work." Mr. Sawaguchi seemed satisfied as well, saying, "I got to do just as many action scenes as the guys, which let me show a new side of myself."

SABAN GEARS UP WITH VR TROOPERS



Burbank, CA: Saban Entertainment has announced the release of a new live-action series that shows the September called *VR TROOPERS* (the "VR" stands for "Virtual Reality") & it "combines high-powered martial arts, high-tech action and high resolution virtual reality". The new series combines episodes from the original Japanese series *NEO-GEAR* and *STREET*.

The story follows the adventures of three young adults: Ryan Steel, Rachel Star and J. H. Kuno who are brought together by Professor Hart, a holographic character who reveals an invention that will allow passage between the Actual World and a computer cyberspace known as Virtual Reality. It is the goal of General, Master of Virtual Reality whose identity in this world is that of undercovered Karl Ziktor, to breach the reality barrier and bring his army from Virtual Reality to Actual Reality.



SCREAMING FROM
PAGES OF THE ORIGINAL
MANGA BY YOSHIKI
TAKAYA COMES THE
HYPER-KINETIC LIVE
ACTION MOVIE!

BIO-BOOSTER ARMOR

GUYVER

THE GUYVER—WHAT
WENT WRONG?

by Douglas Dean

The Guyver is the story of how a young man named Sean Barker (Jack Armstrong) gets caught up in the plans of an international corporation named Chronos to take over the world. Chronos has created genetically engineered warriors called Zoonoids, which are able to change from human to monster form and back at will. They are also trying to discover the secrets of a strange object called a Guyver Unit. One of Chronos's scientists, Dr. Tetsu Segawa (Greg Kinnear), tries to stop Chronos by stealing the Unit and taking it to CIA agent Max Reed (Mark Hamill). He is pursued and killed by a

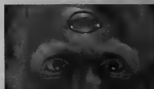
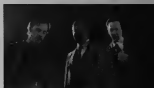
group of Zoonoids led by the gruesome Lisker (Michael Berryman), but not before he ditches the Unit.

Sean discovers the Unit and accidentally activates it when a street gang attacks him shortly afterwards. It bonds with him, turning him into the bio-boosted warrior Guyver. Chronos's leader, Balcus (David Gale) decides to send his minions to kidnap Sean's girlfriend Misky (originally "Mizuki") (Vivian Wu), the late Dr. Segawa's daughter, thinking that she might know something. Sean and Max make an attempt to rescue her, but Sean is apparently killed when the "control metal" is pulled out of the forehead of his Guyver armor. Misky and Max are then forcefully taken to Chronos headquarters, where Max undergoes Zoonoid "treatment" and Misky learns just how terrible Chronos's ambitions are.

I must admit, I already had some preconceptions when I first sat down to watch *The Guyver*. I was already quite familiar with the Yoshiaki Takaya manga, for one thing. For another, I'd wanted to meet a member of the stage crew at a convention some months prior to my seeing the film. He informed me that they'd played the story for laughs, which dismayed me. The news that one of the supporting actors was Jimmy "J.J." Walker didn't do much to raise my hopes. (No offense to Mr. Walker; I've seen some of his recent stand-up routines and still find him amusing. I just didn't think he was suitable for this film. Of course, some people said that (and still do) about Michael Keaton playing Batman...)

Seeing the film, I found my fears fairly justified. Horror and humor are not mutually incompatible. Successful films like *The Twilight Zone*, *Gremlins*, *Army of Darkness*, and *An American Werewolf in London* have proved that. However, these two elements seemed more thrown together than blended in *The Guyver*, each one attempting to dominate the other at odd intervals. The results of this mood conflict aren't pretty. I suspect this was a mirror of the conflicting dual guidance of the

THE GUYVER





film's two directors, Steve Wang and Screaming Mad George.



The film's directors are both big names in the special effects realm. As one might expect from their films, the sets and the stunts look great. Even the costumes are nice, once one looks beyond the campier aspects that draw attention to the fact that these are men in suits, not monsters. [For those familiar with the original, one must also get used to the fact that these monsters are also quite man-sized, not the 10- and 12-foot horrors of the manga. Judging by the film's budget (more on that below), I find this an acceptable compromise.] When the monsters are treated seriously, it works. The Guyver suit in particular is a remarkable three-dimensional recreation of a two-dimensional drawing. As for the special effects, well.... Up to a point, they're also very good, but here and there—and particularly at the end of the final battle—it looks like the budget was running quite low in comparison to the rest of the film.




Unfortunately, scripting and acting sort of got left by the wayside to let those other aspects shine. The dialogue is awkward to begin with, as such comic-based material will be. Screenplay writer Jon Purdy did a decent enough job with it, but some spots are still hard to take, such as the blessedly brief "rappin' Zoonid!" bit with





comedy-relief underlings Striker (Jimmy Walker) and Ramsey (Peter Spellos). A bigger problem was delivery: some of the actors just never seemed to get into their roles at all. Armstrong's Sean never seems to react as strongly as he should, and much the same is true of Wu's Mizky. This is a shame, as they are supposed to be two of the key central figures of the film. Thankfully, Gale and Berryman's performances are wonderfully consistent in their villainousness, though Gale's "Come and get me!" near the end seems a bit too farcical when it should have been sinister.





The news that the second Guyver film will be taken more seriously is heartening. If the actors are directed to emote properly and the budget holds out, it should be quite an improvement. I just hope not too many potential viewers are too discouraged by this first film to give the second a try. Meanwhile, in years to come, should pop-culture phenomenon *MySims*, *Science Theater 3000* has long enough, *The Guyver* may well find itself a deserving victim of that show's razzing wit.




THE GUYVER



GUYVER CREDITS

CAST

Sean Barker.....	Jack Armstrong
Mirky Segawa.....	Vivian Wu
Max Reed.....	Mark Hamill
Fallon Balcus.....	David Gale
Lusker.....	Michael Berryman
Striker.....	Jimmy Walker
Ramsey.....	Peter Spellos
Weber.....	Spice Williams
Dr. Tezuka Segawa.....	Greg Pak

CREW

Producer.....	Brian Yuena
Directors.....	Screaming Mad
George and Steve Wang	
Director of Photography.....	Levie Isacki
Screenplay.....	Jon Purdy
Production Coordinator.....	Lorelei Achor
Script Supervisor.....	Martin Krosser
Music Composer.....	Matthew Morse
Set Design.....	Gilbert Mercier
Set Decorator.....	Julie Brooke
Beattie	
Creature Effects.....	Steve Wang
and Screaming Mad George	
Costumer.....	Linda "Lain"
Meltzer	
Make Up Artist.....	Jill Benoit
SPEX Supervisor.....	Michael Deak
Special Effects Coordinator.....	Thomas C.
Ramone	
Mechanical Effects.....	Jake "The
Snake" McKinnon and Tim Ralston	

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE....

GUYVER

DARK HERO

Guyver: Dark Hero

Review by Steve Roberts

The Guyver is back! The follow-up to 1991's *The Guyver*, director Steve Wang's *Guyver: Dark Hero* is a more ferocious and fast-paced look at the monster-smashing manga superhero. Excellent special effects and martial arts frame a well-written and -acted story of self-discovery, action, and intrigue.

It is a year later for Sean Barker (David Hayter), a year since he found (and became) the Guyver, a biomechanical alien armored weapon that has merged with him. After apparently destroying the alien Chronos Corporation and their powerful Zoanoid war creatures, Sean deals out justice Guyver-style to homicidal drug smugglers. However, Sean is not happy that the Guyver symbiote forces him to kill whomever he fights, leaving mangled criminals in his destructive wake. Sean also has dreams about recently-discovered caves and cave paintings off in Utah. He investigates, hoping to find the answer to his problems. The caves and their mysteries are being pored over by a team of archaeologists who specialize in paranormal phenomena, headed by Dr. Edwards and his

(continued on next page)



THE GUYVER: DARK HERO

THE GUYVER: DARK HERO



daughter, Cory (Kathy Christopherson). All is not as it first seems, though, as the dig is infiltrated by both the government and the not-quite-so-destroyed Chronos Corporation. All of the parties involved come to discover an ancient spaceship that is not only biological, but still alive after millions of years underground. Now Sean's mission becomes clear, but can the power of the Guyver defend the secrets of the spaceship and the archaeologists from the plans of both the government and Chronos's Zonoids?

Reportedly made for one-third the budget of its prequel, *Guyver: Dark Hero* shows off an incredible variety of special effects, ranging from excellently detailed creatures to computer-generated imagery used for the terrific transformations that the characters go through, including the showstopping Sean-to-Guyver transformation as Sean dives off a cliff! Also, there are the awesome martial arts stunts, the likes of which have only been seen in recent films from Hong Kong

starring Jet Li or Jackie Chan. This is what a super-powered fight should look like!" The cast is different from the first Guyver movie and they all turn in exemplary performances, particularly David Hayter as Sean/Guyver and Christopher Michael as Crane.

Steve Wang has said that he intended *Guyver: Dark Hero* for fans of the Guyver's other adventures in comics and animated videos, and this movie delivers. Forget Batman, Superman, and even City Hunter. This is definitely *the best* translation of a comic-book hero to motion picture *period*. Associate producers L.A. Hero, also known for their dubbing and reproduction of Japanese animation, are in the process of finding a U.S. distributor for the film, but it is due for release in Japan in April, 1994. U.S. release is likely to occur some time in summer of 1994.

Look out, America, it's *Guyver Time*!

**AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR OF
GUYVER AND GUYVER:DARK HERO**

STEVE WANG

as conducted by David Crowe

David Crowe: You have been working on a sequel to the Guyver live action movie of several years ago. How is that coming?

Steve Wang: Oh, it's finished. I'm on to another film already.

DC: So when can we expect to see that out?

SW: That will be out in October, on video everywhere. New Line (Pictures) is distributing it.

DC: What is Guyver II Dark Hero like?

SW: It's nothing like the first movie in terms of tone. It's a darker film. It's Dark Hero, the title. It's sort of a further exploration of Sean Barker's quest to find answers as to why he is the Guyver. And of course he winds up with all sorts of problems. The whole film is like a series of reveals. The first scene doesn't give away what the whole film is about.

DC: How is it different from Guyver I?

SW: It's very different from the first Guyver. It's very serious in tone. It's a lot more violent, along the lines of the original animation. There's a lot more action in the film. The stunts that we do are a lot crazier than the first movie. The first movie is really tame in comparison to the second one.

DC: So which actors are back from the original film?

SW: None, actually. It's all new cast, including Sean. Mizuki is in the film very briefly. The rest is all new characters.

DC: What did you do on this movie? You co-directed Guyver I with Screaming Mad George and handled the special effects. Do you do the same on this one?



SW: Well, I produced, directed, wrote the story, designed the creatures, edited the film with a co-editor and was post-production supervisor. I basically did everything.

DC: So it's entirely your show, then?

SW: Yeah.

DC: Was *Guyver II* that big of a success?

SW: Apparently so. It's been all over cable, it's just out on laserdisc recently now. It was very successful in Japan, and apparently it was very successful here and worldwide. I mean on the level of straight-to video kind of film. It went theatrical in Japan (and) in a couple of European territories, so they wanted to do a sequel.

DC: Will there be a director's cut of the film on laserdisc?

SW: No, there's one cut of the film right now. There may be a second cut, which is a 30 minute shorter version that New Line might be putting out with a PG rating, which I oppose, but they may or may not do it. But the cut that's coming out everywhere is going to be the original cut, two hours long.

DC: How did *Guyver II* get made?

SW: My involvement came in when they asked if I would do the sequel, and I asked "Well, how much money?" And they said "under a million bucks." And I thought "Well, that's crazy. That's a third of the budget of the original." But they hit me that we could do it like the original animation in tone, which was a big plus because that's how I wanted to do the first one but we ended up not going that route (in the first movie). Then also, they gave me complete creative control. They give you the money, and you make the film, you come back with it, which was also very tempting, so I took it. I made the film my way.

DC: So what was the final budget for *Guyver II*?

SW: It was under a million.

DC: Which animation do you consider the *Guyver* to be based on more? The earlier 1985 one (*Out of Control*) or the later ten part video series?

SW: It's based more on the newer *GAV* series which was like a six-parter, then another six parts afterwards. The story in the film is not any particular story that's in the *Guyver* animation. I didn't feel the need to repeat what was already done in the comics and also in the animation. But the tone is the same. There's a lot of elements that are the same, but its a very fresh approach, and we screened it for Yoshiaki Takaya, who is the creator of the *Guyver*, and he really loved it. He felt the tone was very true to *Guyver*, but it offered the audience something new and fresh to look at that's very *Guyver*-esque. So he gave it a thumbs-up. He's really very happy with it, which was great, because I was the one who gave him the song-and-dance number and told him "Trust me, trust me, I'll do this justice, I'll put this thing on the map," and make it so everyone will like it and the fans won't be disappointed. And we screened it at a comic convention recently also for a lot of *Guyver* fans, and they really loved it, so that was a really good sign.



DC: A lot of the Zoonoids in the first movie seemed to be original designs, rather than from the cartoon. Is that the case in the second one?

SW: Yeah. That's one thing we did stray away from conceptually. One of the problems I had with the animation was that I felt the Zoonoid design and the Guyver design were way too similar. They were both very sort of space suit-insect looking overall. There's a couple that were very organic looking like the big bat one (Rammoth) and the rhino ster (Dartorb). So we modeled most of our Zoonoids after that type versus the really insect, kind of plated ones. What I feared was the Guyver fans know what the Guyver is, what a Zoonoid is, but the majority of the audience, who is not familiar with Guyver could not tell the difference between the Guyver and the Zoonoids, even after we made these modifications. So we wanted to stray as far away from the Guyver-looking Zoonoids as possible.

DC: Were there any particular animals you used as models for the second-series Zoonoids?

SW: They're just a mish-mash of everything. I hate to just take an animal and turn it into a monster, although that always seems to be what people identify with the most. We did sort of a variation on the rhino guy crossed with Gregole, which was the guy with the big horn. We had a variation on him in the sequel in a tribute which I think Guyver fans will see when they watch the film. That's really about it. All the other creatures were very different. And we also created a new character, [with] a concept that would be very logical in the Guyver world but that has not been touched upon yet in the comic. I got into a fight with Takaya about it. What I was really rooting for was doing something new and different, but yet would make a lot of sense in the Guyver world by bringing this character in, and he didn't want to create a new character in this respect. I talked him into it and after he saw it he really loved it.

DC: And this new character is?

SW: Well, it's kind of a secret. Should I say?

DC: Aw, go ahead.

SW: There's an evil second Guyver, but the concept is that he's not a regular Guyver, he's a Zoonoid turned into a Guyver. So he's a monster version of the Guyver, which is very interesting. And he literally beats the shit out of Guyver by displaying a lot of his powers.

DC: Like what kind of powers?

SW: Well, he's just a lot stronger than the Guyver. Basically, everything the Guyver does, he can do better. The fight that we did with him and Guyver is very different than the fights we did in the rest of the movie with Guyver versus Zoonoids. Because this guy really is a mean son-of-a-bitch and beats the shit out of the Guyver.

DC: Who was the character of Max from Guyver I based on in the comic?

SW: You know, I don't know. Max was a combination of Mizuka's brother (Tetsuro) slash CIA guy. He was the token CIA guy who has to be the key link

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in Mizuki's life and investigating what was going on. He was sort of the McGuffin character. We are able to explain a lot of the stuff through him, through his investigation. We have a character similar to that in *Guyver: Dark Hero*. We have a government agent involved also, but he knows a lot more about Chronos than any characters in the first movie. He knows more about Chronos than probably Sean will ever know. He's been investigating these guys for a long time.

DC: Any new or difficult special effects in *Guyver II*?

SW: Yeah. Actually we did most of the *Guyver* effects in the first film with traditional optics and makeup effects, all shot live on camera. Most of our *Guyver* effects now are all done via computer assist. We have a really incredible shot. There's a scene where Sean jumps off a cliff to go save Corey, who is one of the main characters, the lead heroine, and there's like a thousand foot cliff and jumps off the cliff and transforms into the *Guyver* and lands in front of the camera in one shot without any cuts. So we're able to do that sort of stuff, more along the lines of what the animation was doing. They didn't have a shot like this, but they've suggested stuff like this. So we literally just brought that back to life. The transformation of *Guyver* where he can de-transform from the *Guyver* to Sean Barker in one shot without cuts. You see the armor plate explode off his body and disappear without cuts. And all the blades growing on the *Guyver*, he can do that without any cuts. We see full body shots of blades growing out which are very effective. So I think we are able to suspend the audience's disbelief a lot more effectively with the new technology. And then there's the standard morphs. And we did some conventional special effects stuff as well.

DC: Did you have a favorite effect in the film?

SW: I think my favorite has to be the flying transformation, because that scene is so dramatic. And when he transforms, nobody expects him to do that. Every time we screened it, people just howled as soon as he lands. They didn't expect to see this guy jump off a cliff and armor explode out and form on his body as he continued to drop to his death and then land in front of the camera as the *Guyver* without any cuts. People just don't expect to see stuff like that stuff. When they see it, and it's done well, they're just blown away. That one has to be my favorite. I don't think it was the best, most well-executed effect shot in the film, but it was done very well nevertheless and it was very, very effective. There were some computer graphic shots in the film I don't think people can even tell that they were computer graphics, just because they were so real. And people have asked me afterward in some of the transformation stuff, they thought we had rigged it live action or something. You know, physical effects. I just said "How do you rig something like that? It's impossible to rig." With computer graphics, we've done extremely well.

DC: Do you have a favorite *Zoanoid*?

SW: The *Guyver Zoanoid* is probably my favorite. He's Crane, one of the main bad guys from Chronos. He turns into a *Zoanoid*, which is pretty neat, that I designed. Then he went from that monster into the *Guyver Zoanoid*, which I also designed. I think that one came out really neat, because it was a monstrous version of the *Guyver*.

DC: Has the original *Guyver* design changed from the first movie?

**"The
Guyver
Zoanoid
is prob-
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SW: Yes. Actually, conceptually, it's the same, but the proportions are a lot more like the animation. The shoulders are a lot bigger, the waist is smaller in proportion, the legs are longer. There's only so much you can do with human anatomy. The way the Guyver is drawn in the comic, he's seven feet tall and there is nobody on Earth that is shaped like that. So we managed to cheat a bit here and there so the Guyver suit is much more dynamic looking now. He's quite a presence on the screen now.

DC: Were you able to put in more of the esoteric energy attacks that the Guyvers use?

SW: Some. He has some lasers and stuff that we use. Again, that's all a budget issue. We had him shooting lasers on this show. There's the token Megamasher as well. We got his blades glowing a lot more convincingly. He's not as Earthbound as in the first movie. He literally jumps all over the place. All the monsters, they're very airborne in the film. As far as the other energy weapons... Oh, he actually levitated in the film too in some scenes. As far as the visual effects that were in the animation, we still haven't tackled a whole lot of that yet, because it's a budgetary issue. The film looks a lot bigger than the first movie although we did it with 1/3 the budget of the original. It was a hard obstacle, it was all the money issue. People were coming to me and saying "Why don't you do this or why don't you do that" and I'd say "I'd love to, I just don't have the money to do it." They don't understand how expensive it is to do special effects. But we did quite a bit, and the general consensus of everybody who has seen this film who has also seen the first one is that this one is ten times better. It definitely looks like a bigger budget film overall, because there's more effects in it.

DC: How did a Japanese cartoon come to be made into a series US-made live-action films?

SW: Basically, the creator of the Guyver knew Screaming Mad George's agent and they were talking about making Guyver the live action film in Japan. And so George's agent contacted George and asked him if he would do the effects on it. And George said "No, I don't want to do the effects. I'll do the effects if I can direct." And so the whole thing came over to the U.S. and the first Guyver was born. And then George got me involved as the film's director at that point. That's how the whole thing came about. And so the film made a profit and they wanted to keep making a profit. They gave me less money and the wanted to make more money from it.

DC: A lot of people were dissatisfied with the comedic tone of Guyver I. Why did it differ so much from the comic & cartoon?

SW: I don't blame them, because I was disappointed with that as well. When I first came on the project, it was going to be a dark, serious film. And with the advent of Ninja Turtles coming out at that point being so popular, a mutual decision was made that it was going to be a comedy, which I wasn't thrilled by, but it wasn't my job to question at that point. As a co-director, my job was to make it funny, make it slapstick, whatever it was. And so that's what I did. George and I basically had to

make a comedy out of it, which was the big fight I just got over with New Line. Now, Power Rangers is so popular, and that's goofy comedy too, and they wanted to cut my film down, and release a 90-minute version as a comedy. And I told them "The Power Rangers are just the Ninja Turtles of the 90s." I fought against it, and fortunately, I won. They're going to release my version unrated, because the whole reason I did the film was as sort of an apology to the fans for the first Guyver, because I felt we

kind of sold out and made this thing what it wasn't supposed to be. So, I'm very confident the fans of Guyver will love this one. So far, it's proven to be true. I've had really old Guyver fans, from the mid-80s, coming to me after the screening and saying they're glad someone finally did it right. Because it's very faithful to the comic in terms of the tone and the elements.

DC: Do you think that the success of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers has heightened interest in Japanese media projects here in the U.S.?

SW: Absolutely. I think it generated a lot of interest. I think it's great, because I think there's a lot to be gained by adopting these things. I'm not sure I want to do another Japanese-comic-adaptation-to-live-action-film ever again, because it's very hard to please people, and there's just too many rules. It's hard to be creative in that respect. My relation with Takuya was a very good one. It was an older one, from the first movie, so it was easier to talk him into letting me just go crazy and do a lot of stuff that I wanted to do. He loved what I did. But it's hard if you're just going cold into another project that's completely new and you have to convince people to do things in a certain way.

DC: Are there any other Japanese cartoons you would like to bring to live-action?

SW: Me, personally? No. I don't think I'd want to do another Japanese thing brought to life live action. I'm doing one right now that's hopefully be my last Japanese-related comic kind of project. I'm going to be directing the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers movie.

DC: Whua!

SW: Yeah. In fact, I'm in the midst of pre-production right now.

DC: Can you spill some details on that?

SW: Well, it's kind of difficult, because not a whole lot of decisions have been made. It's just going to be a bigger, better film. It won't be TV show. The effects will be high-tech. Higher tech, I should say. Everything's going to be bigger, on a bigger scale. And more realistic, but not straying away from what the Power Rangers are. There still very colorful. There's lots of action, still lots of comedy. It's a kid's movie. There's big robots, a big robot fight at the end. And the robots are going to look a little funky, in terms of they're these big dinosaur machines, but they'll be done with the latest technology.





"I designed stuff for Predator, Gremlins 2, stuff on Batman...I've done stuff on a whole bunch of movies, big and small."

DC: So you're going to be using the earlier dinosaur ones rather than the later designs they're talking about for the new season?

SW: Yeah, but we're not using the actual dinosaurs, we're redesigning all of them. And then the Megazord, the five robots coming together will be an all-new design. We don't have a whole lot of time to make this movie, we don't have a script yet, we're in pre-production and this film has to be done by mid-March for early April release. That's set in stone already. We're going to do the best we can in the time we have. My goal is to bring the Japanese-robot animation style to life as well as we can in the time we have. It's kind of a shame, because it's not so much a money issue.

It's a time issue. They're willing to put up quite a bit of money to make this film and I'm really excited about it, because you're actually going to see a giant Gundam/Robotech kind of robot fight destroying the city like Godzilla, done a lot higher tech, but we don't have a lot of time to do it.

DC: Will the Green Ranger be in the Power Ranger film?

SW: No. It'll be the White Ranger.

DC: Isn't he from the show that followed Zyuranger?

SW: He's from Dairanger, but they're incorporating him into the show now.

DC: Do you know anything about how that's going to work?

SW: Yeah. I guess people who read this magazine won't give a shit if I give away what happens. The Green Ranger gets killed and the White Ranger appears on the scene and they don't know who it is and whoa! Lo and behold, it's Tommy, and he's back in an all-new outfit with all new powers. So for the movie version, the Green Ranger won't exist, he'll already be the White Ranger. By the time the film comes out, we'll have seen six months of White Ranger already.

DC: So are they going to use the Dairanger costumes?

SW: Just for the White Ranger. But for the movie version, we're redesigning all the costumes. It still looks very similar. When you look at it, it's still Power Rangers, but we sort of gave them production value. It's the difference between Batman TV show versus Batman the movie. That's kind of what we're doing to the show. We're not darkening the tone, we're giving things higher production values.

DC: How did you get into motion pictures? You've worked on Batman Returns and Predator, haven't you?

SW: My main background is in special makeup effects, creature effects. I designed stuff for Predator, Gremlins 2, stuff on Batman ... I've done stuff on a

whole bunch of movies, big and small. The way I broke in was I made my own film, a film called *Kung-Fu Rascals* which was a film shot on Super-8 that was released straight to video. I spent a year and a half on that, my own money, my own time. I made this thing, got some notice. Then I got into the first *Guyver* and eventually got to do the second *Guyver*. It hasn't been an easy road by any means. Every show you do it's a big sacrifice. You never do it for the money, because there's never any money in a low budget film. You do it for the opportunity to do something good. Or something good enough that it will get you another gig. So all the sacrifices I made on *Guyver*. *Dark Hero* paid off. I'm on a big picture now and I'm still doing what I enjoy most.

DC: Can you tell us some about *Kung-Fu Rascals*?

SW: It's a Super-8 feature that I did based on this world I created. There's three characters. The leader is called Ten Chow Mien. Then there's Liao Se, who's like a white guy dressed up like Bruce Lee, and Ropo, a jungle boy. It's kind of a fantasy period piece that takes place in a world that's somewhat Asian, but yet not. And they battle evil demons and giant stone war gods. We did a tribute to *Dai-Blajin*, which is a Japanese series of films about this giant stone war god come to life and taking revenge on these bad guys in this village. We did a tribute to that by doing our own version of it. We had the ultimate stone god battle at the end of the film, where two titans come to life and beat the shit out each other. It's a lot of fun. A lot of magic, a lot of comedy. It's basically an action-comedy-fantasy. Everything short of a musical. Which, actually, I think I'm going to tackle.

DC: What kind of influences do you think have crept into your work?

SW: Well, from a filmmakers point of view, I'm a big fan of Hong Kong cinema. I was watching Hong Kong films back in the '70s. I'm a big fan of Jackie Chan. I think he's definitely the best when it comes to martial arts action films. I've watched a lot of John Woo films. There's a whole lot of Tsui Hark films that I've been following since the late '70s-early '80s. That has a big influence on my work. I love Japanese Animation. I love a lot of their *sentai* series, the *Kamen Rider* series. I know all the people involved with those shows: The producers, the effects people, the actors. I do a lot of work in Japan and I have a lot of professional associates over there, and they do all those shows. And of course, I'm a big fan of special effects, make-up effects, having worked on a whole bunch of big blockbusters myself. That was primarily my main background. These are my main influences when I do things. It's not surprising that I would be doing this kind of a film.



"I love a lot of their *sentai* series, the *Kamen Rider* series."

DC: Do you have a favorite sentai show?

SW: Favorite sentai? I would have to say [Himitsu Sentai] Gorangers, the original. Just because I watched it as a kid and have fond memories of it. I watched it in '75 and it made a big impact on me. My favorite superhero is Ultraman, the very first one. I saw it when it first came out, and it just blew me away. It changed my life. I was just a kid and I didn't know what I was going to do. I started doing some drawings and stuff. Then I saw Ultraman in the third grade, and that was it. Everything I did was leading towards that. My eyes were opened to the sense of wonder. I moved to the U.S. and started mask collecting, mask making, which led me into film.

DC: Where are you from originally?

SW: I'm from Taiwan. I moved here in '75.

DC: What do you see yourself doing in the future? More special effects work or more directing?

SW: I see myself doing a lot of directing and producing. Eventually, I'd like to get my own production company together. Sort of a mini-Lucasfilm situation. I'd like to have my own in-house facilities. Just keep directing and producing the kind of films that I want to do. My tastes right now are very heavy into special effects. But that taste may change.

DC: You have also sculpted some model kits, haven't you?

SW: Yeah, I did that for a little while. Just to make some money on the side.

DC: What have you done lately in that area?

SW: I did like a bust, a mask for a Japanese company. The owners are my agents in Japan. Sort of a 1/2 scale creature mask that you can put on a plaque. That was the most recent thing I did for them. I don't plan to be doing a whole lot of that stuff, because it's very time consuming. It's always very frustrating for me to do model kits, because I'm kind of a perfectionist and I'll find myself doing it over and over again until I get what I like, but then months will go by. It's very painful for me to do a model kit.

DC: Are there any other film projects that you are working on now?

SW: Just a lot of stuff on the back burner, but not at the moment, because I'm literally immersed in Power Rangers right now.

DC: Is there anything you'd like to say to our readers in closing?

SW: Just keep watching this stuff, because ultimately, if they don't watch the stuff, nobody's going to make it. And I for one would like to keep making it, being a big fan of it. This industry can use the support. The more you want to see something, the more you should support it.

END OF INTERVIEW



“Eventually, I'd like to get my own production company together. Sort of a mini-Lucasfilm situation.”



"WHY I LOVE SPACE GIANTS!"

PART 2

by John "Bo" Marshall

If you remember, back in *Scarf #1* I was raving about how much I loved *The Space Giants*, that classic live-action show about a family of robots who turn into rockets. Well, you lucky, lucky people, I'm back now to finish what I started!

The Space Giants began life as *Magma Taisaki*, a live-action TV series based on characters created by the legendary Osamu Tezuka. Magma Taisaki (*Arakamador Magma*) actually beat the legendary *Ultraman* to the airwaves, premiering on the fourth of July, 1966. It was translated into English and rebroadcast onto American TV first as *Monsters from Outer Space*, then *The Space Giants*. The show had a combination of a cool villain, wacky world domination plans, and an unlikely group of heroes. Memories of Goldar and the gang still fester in the minds of an entire generation of baby boomers. As I had the worst case of *Giants-itis*, it was up to me to chronicle the show for the American people.

To bring you up to speed: Reporter Bo Murra, along with his wife Terri and son Mike, is visited by Rodok, an evil being from the far planet of Munch. Rodok feels that Earth is the most beautiful of all planets, and must be added to his collection. Opposing Rodok is the mighty robot Goldar, along with his wife Silver and son Gam (whose design was based on Mike). So far, Rodok has terrorized the Earth with his shape-shifting Lugo Men and an assortment of monsters. The Earth has held its ground thanks to the family of robots and their mentor, the wise wizard Methuslem. But Rodok is tired of being patient and playing fair. He vows that there will be no mercy from now on! He has kidnapped Mike's mom and now devises an even more evil scheme.

When we left off, I was talking about Story #6, in which human scientists had invented a strain of bacteria that wipes out Rodok's henchmen, the Lugo Men. Well, to retaliate, Rodok invents Toxic Bacteria to wipe out all human life! There is a lot of running around until finally Rodok's plans are thwarted and the anti-Lugo bacteria is harnessed into outer space. But does it have any effect?

In Story #7, we get one of the most action-packed stories of the series. It's Christmas, and a department store Santa gives Mike a very interesting gift: a Christmas stocking with a black piece of paper in it. When Mike tries to toss the paper away, it flies up and sticks itself to his living room wall. It becomes a video screen and on it appears—Rodok! He warns Mike of his Christmas present to Earth: the monster *Vacuum*!

Now, I really have to admit, of the thousands of Japanese monsters I have seen over the years, *Vacuum* is the most ridiculous looking thing I have ever seen. It resembles a... well... let me take a stab at it. Imagine a giant, three-fingered black leather glove. Now put suction disks at the ends of each finger. Now imagine it flying by flapping its two side fingers while squawking like a seagull. And there you have *Vacuum*. The plot this time involves Rodok's campaign to conquer the Earth with Dwarf Robots, which are a new, miniaturized form of Lugo Men. They are not really robots at all, but are composed of the same vegetable matter as Lugo Men, and indeed are exact duplicates of Lugo Men (grey in black paint, black undersuits and black stocking masks). Apparently, the bacteria had some effect, but the only real result is that the Lugo Men were re-engineered, stronger than ever. During a battle early in the story, Rodok retreats and releases a prisoner he took long ago:

(continued on next page)



Miko's mother, Toriko! No sooner has Toriko arrived than Miko's dad (he must leave for New York to cover the worldwide outbreak of Dwarf Robots. Let's hope he and Toriko had at least a few minutes to get re-acquainted!

Rodak has a new assistant named Sultan, who is captured by the heroes. When Sultan finds out that Rodak had to lure several humans into a trap and wait to conquer the universe, Sultan rebels and switches sides. Rodak's Dwarf Robots enter people's homes and make them slaves to Rodak. They carry out his plan to bomb every building in every city because "Sultan must be in one of them!" Vacuum has the Dwarf Robot substance in him and can release it in either an army of small robots or as the monster Goo, a giant pile of wilting vegetable matter. Eventually, the wise wizard Methuselah devises a freezing bomb that deactivates the Dwarf Robots. However, Vacuum shrinks down and gets Sultan before Golder can destroy him.

From all-out assault we go to deadly intrigue with Story #8. Inhabitants of a resort town are all going mad. It's Miko's assistant, Kito, goes to the Hilton Hotel to investigate. When the impatient Glee dies off to investigate as well, Silver apologizes to Methuselah for her son's behavior. Methuselah is amazed: "Your son is perfect," he says, "and all he's interested in doing is using his rocket." It turns out that a natural spring used by the hotel has become infected by the space chemical Zana. This chemical causes victims to be able to hear others broadcast across a certain radio frequency. Through this means, Rodak has yet another army of slaves. The chemical Zana is excreted by the dehydrated dinosaur Gorda, though the gory details are thankfully glossed over in the dialogue.

Next comes a plague of insects for Story #9. An army of bugs which dine on concrete and steel is ravaging Japan. Their leader is a giant beetle named Narik. (No relation to Elaine on Taxi. Well, not that I'm aware of, anyway.) Rodak performs various acts of sabotage in his efforts to prevent Humanity from containing its efforts to destroy the bugs.

From this point on, The Space Giants adopts a new format, which is used to flesh out the remaining sixteen episodes. From here on, the chapters in The Space Giants saga run in two two-episode sections instead of one longer four-episode section. Still, there are subplots or other connections which group episodes in clusters of four.

Story #10, one of the wildest, involves an aerial partnership between Rodak and an international gangster named Heroldo. The gangster has stolen some H-bombs with the help of his Japanese associate Schneider. (No relation to the landowner from One Day at a Time. At least, none that I'm aware of.) They have the power of the H-bomb, but not the brains to use it most effectively. That's where Rodak comes in. He devises an elaborate extortion plot, similar to the one hatched by SPECTRE in the James Bond movie Thunderball. But while he works out his strategy, he sends the monster Claw to Earth. Claw, a lobster with a rabbit's face and hypnotic, spouting eyes, spreads a noxious gas that actually causes a physiological dependence in those who breathe it. While Japan is reeling in the throes of withdrawal, Rodak employs a second monster named Dilax to launch one of the H-bombs toward the United States. The wildest aspect of the story is an American reporter who is actually a spy for Rodak. The "actor" playing this guy evades shamelessly, waving a cigar around and becoming his eyebrows like some baggy-pants comic. The scene where he gets shot is the best moment of the story.

Story Eleven is really two stories in one. First, Rodak sends the creature Gory to Earth. Gory is a giant cyclopean with the ability to alter its mass and shape at will, making it very hard to locate. Later, Rodak uses the horned dinosaur Magoo to draw a comet within striking distance of Earth.

Story Twelve shows Rodak at his most evil. He makes a pact with a little old man named Kowag, whose grandson was run over by a truck. In return, a creature named Gorda appears and began to attack vehicles moving along a highway. (This is very similar to the Ultraman episode "Highway 87 of Terror", which aired on Japanese TV a

few weeks later.) Rodak makes that Gorda is given life by some part of Kowag's unconscious mind. To capitalize on this, Rodak prays on the man's anger and turns him into a tiny superbug. First Gorda, then a crustacean named Ludo are captured by Kowag's strange powers. Finally, Kowag sacrifices himself so that he can no longer be used as a tool of destruction.

The last four episodes are pretty much divided into two separate stories, so that's how I'll treat them. Story Thirteen is a gruesome tale of a space bacteria that elings in an Earth space capsule. When the capsule crashes (despite Golder's intervention) the bacteria spreads. It is a strange mass of orange liquid that crawls an unseemly web, or, as Kito puts it, "The liquid's crying!" Fortunately, the bacteria is stopped by the arrival of its "natural enemy", a space antibiotic. No, really? The bacteria can also form into a composite creature called Rodi. (No relation to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. At least, none that I'm aware of. That's the last one, I promise!) Anyway, because Rodi is a composite creature, it can grow new appendages whenever any are torn off by Golder. New arms, new legs, new tail, new... arms...

The last story brings the entire 52-episode tale to a close. After many, many failed attempts at conquering Earth, Rodak decides to give it everything he has and really show the Earthlings no mercy. He goes to track down Golder's base, but the robot leads him to a different volcano. Then he orders Kono, the toughest monster alive, from a far galaxy, trading ten planets for him. Kono is a dragon-like creature with enormous, antelope-style antlers. When Golder is forced to retreat, he must travel to an isolated planet called Anada, located in "nobody's" galaxy. But Rodak has planned for it all, and Kono is there. After an incredible battle, Golder destroys Kono, and in the process defeats Rodak as well. Want to leave now? I'll tell you. If not, skip to the next paragraph. The scene is that Rodak, frothing the battle-on which was needed, put his spirit into the machine. That way, when Kono died, Rodak died also.

Methuselah appears in the sky, riding a rainbow. As Miko, Ina, Toriko, Kito, and the members of the defense squad Nautilus Sarobbi (sic) look on, Methuselah leads his robot family into space.

But was that really the end? Well, yeah, actually it was. There never was a second series of The Space Giants, or for that matter a sequel to the original Japanese show, Magma Tash. There was, however, a 1990's animated movie. I haven't seen it, but considering the liberties taken with the animated Giant Robot, I'm sure I'm not missing much.

Admission for The Space Giants continues today. It is possible for American fans of Magma Tash to purchase a wind-up Magma (Golder) from Hikaru Toys. A few years ago, an American novelty shop chain called Heaven sold polybagged Space Giants monsters, including Claw, Magoo, and Dilax. For really intrepid fans, there is a small array of Magma Tash toys produced in the States, sometimes available from Japanese antique toy dealers. There is also the ultra-rare (an off-licence) Space Giants comic book, put out in the late Seventies by a small American publishing company. A new Space Giants book was collected in 1993 by Bantam's Press, but has yet to materialize. (Subotaged by Dwarf Robots, maybe?)

With Ultra Seven recently turning up on cable and TBS being the most recent broadcaster of The Space Giants, perhaps it's time to write to Ted Turner and convince him that now is the time to bring back Golder and the gang. I for one, would love to experience the sheer joy of seeing once again to watch Mankind's most powerful enemy, the mastermind Rodak!

John Marshall is a freelance writer and publisher of the cult comedy comic book *Moetie Man*. John has written dozens of articles and reviews for magazines such as *Film Threat*, *Collecting Toys*, and *Cult Movies*. His latest screenplay, *Dogfight*, begins preproduction July 5 in Philadelphia.



OH, NO THERE GOES TOKYO!

by Mark Shapiro

Time was when Godzilla meant business.

What probably comes to mind are such films as *Godzilla vs. the Sea Monster*, *Destroy All Monsters*, *Son of Godzilla*, and *Godzilla vs. Rocky*. (Just making sure you're paying attention.)

But before Toho Films named *Godzilla*, Rodan, and some of their noble brethren into dinosaur droppings suitable for child

and brain-dead adults, *Godzilla*'s during the mash all over Tokyo was considered, for a relatively short time, a sacred film-making cause.

Godzilla, King of the Monsters (released as *Gajira* in Japan) was the brainchild of Japanese special effects man Eiji Tsuburaya, a long-time fan of the original King Kong who wanted to create a creature that would rival the giant ape. With the aid of director Ishiro Honda and screenwriter Takao Murata (with a story supplied by Shigeru Kayama), Tsuburaya fashioned a tale that combined prehistoric monsters and the world's preoccupation with the possible dangers of atomic energy. *Godzilla* tells the story of a giant prehistoric animal, once lying dormant on the ocean floor, that has come to life as the result of hydrogen bomb testing and is menacing residents on a small island off the coast of Japan. In short order, *Godzilla*, tiring of the slim pickings offered by fishing boats, wades ashore in downtown Tokyo and proceeds to destroy the city with brute strength and fire-breathing, radioactive breath. He then returns to his underwater lair, preparing for a final assault that will most certainly level Tokyo and lead to the destruction of the rest of the world. All seems lost, when onto the fray steps the reclusive scientist Dr. Serizawa, whose top secret experiment, the oxygen destroyer, is seen as the only solution to the *Godzilla* problem.

Serizawa is reluctant to release the destructive potential of his creation, but is finally convinced and, in a final dramatic underwater confrontation, releases the device, which turns *Godzilla* into a skeleton and, finally, to dust. Serizawa then cuts his air hose, committing a classic suicide that paves the way for his assistants, Ogata and Enako, to live happily ever after.

Gajira was far from an original idea, but what the film lacked in originality it made up for in characterization, superior special effects, and a never-flagging tone of



(continues on next page)

© 1984 Toho Co., Ltd.

actor's serious-mindedness.

The strong Japanese cast, headed by veterans Akira Takirada and Takashi Shimura, takes this all very seriously. Takirada, as Senzawa, is particularly smart, reflecting on the pain of his Kamikaze past and doing the noble thing in his relationship with the respectful British.

Whether by design or budget limitations, Gogiri's matching of monsters and models of Tokyo with the oversized man-on-a-stick Godzilla (played by Japanese mountain Ryoosaka Takasugi) works quite well and, when combined with Honda's deft handling of those black-and-white proceedings, presents a haunting, sorrowfully stated adjunct to the story.

Gogiri opened in Japan in 1954. Critically favorable reviews around interest on these shores, and Trans World Films picked the film up for U.S. release. But, not willing to leave well enough alone, Trans World changed the film's title to *Godzilla, King of the Monsters*, added on what they considered unnecessary scenes (many of which gave real insight into the character of Senzawa) and had director Terry Moore shoot some additional scenes in diving actor Raymond Burr as American reporter Steve Martin, who, according to the revamped story line, while on assignment in Japan observes Godzilla's rampage (and adds a lure for American film audiences).

Producer-director Steve Minner, who claims to be "just into the business because of the original Godzilla," now a pre-*Baywatch* Honda version of the original Japanese cut-and-thrift effort that "it's a beautiful movie. There's this one scene of a survivor of Godzilla's first attack on Tokyo dying in a hospital that is very long but very poetic. Well, when they added Raymond Burr, they chopped that scene up, had a nurse from the original scene come in, it appeared that she was talking to Burr. They added a double who obviously wasn't the same one in the original and they used lighting that was inferior to the lighting of the original."

Godzilla, King of the Monsters was released on these shores in 1956. The film duplicated its overseas success and, in the ensuing years, has gone on to become one of television's perennial favorites.

Meanwhile, back in Japan, the folks at Toho realized there was gold in their big, green dinosaur and quickly put together a sequel called *Gogiri Roids Again* (1955). *Godzilla* had been reduced to status as the end of the first episode, so what was one to do? Just bring him back, call him Gogiri, and pretend like the first film never happened!

For the record, *Gogiri Roids Again* finds Gogiri and a four-footed, spiky-backed alien named Angirus fighting on a Japanese island. Both monsters fall into the sea and become separated. Angirus jumps up in Tokyo and proceeds to stomp all over whatever was left intact from the first film. Gogiri then turns up and starts fight because, new, Gogiri, after what seems like an endless round of man-in-suit battles, kills Angirus and swims away at the hole.

Gogiri Roids Again was picked up for U.S. release, entitled *Gogiri, the Fire Monster*, and released on these shores in 1959 to good but less than *Godzilla* the buzz. Toho put *Godzilla* out to prove that the follow-up was just as good, but of sight did not necessarily translate to word of mind. Especially in the United States, where the now long-dead AMP! Pictures (and in particular producers Harry F. Rank, Ed Rankin, and Richard Kay) got the bright idea to do what amounted to a *Godzilla*-like film to go into production in America in 1957. Writers in Melcher and Ed Wyman were commissioned to write this epic, which had the working title of *The Volcano Monster*.

"It was then this was the studio's response to the success of *Godzilla*," recalls Melcher. "Ed and I were asked to write this monster thing and to basically Americanize the *Godzilla* concept."

The story given to Melcher and Wyman by AMP! (which the writer admits had more than a passing acquaintance with *Gogiri, the Fire Monster*, creates on an expedition to a remote island that discovers two interlocking transatlantic sea and an unlikely foe, in a state of suspended animation. The two creatures are put aboard a jetliner carrier bound for San Francisco.

En route, the transatlantic falls overboard. The second carrier continues to San Francisco, where the anti-hero comes to life and begins having a fit at the way by the boy's expense. Meanwhile, the Texas, having good reptilian legs and being one hell of a swimmer, finds its way to San Francisco, where it remains at coast-to-coast food with other creature San Francisco, needless to say, is crushed, the sky-floater is killed, and the type creature, jumping to the boy and swims off.

There was a plot on Point of View: The Volcano Monster, which is a go proper that. Variety, in its May 7, 1957 issue, announced that it was not to roll on June 17. The film, like whatever reason, never did roll, but, like clock work, Gogiri did much better in year and a half later. Melcher has a story about this *Godzilla, Volcano Monster* mystery.

"I think the producers had seen the Japanese version of *Godzilla*, figured it would be released in the U.S., took the screenplay and said to Ed and I, 'Do this story.' Up until now, I had no idea that we might be making a Japanese script for an already-completed movie." Toho, on the meantime, was searching for monster scripts in a more literal sense with *Godzilla, King of the Monsters* (1957), in which giant flying reptiles emerged in the *Godzilla, Roids Again*, directed by old hand Masahiro Hatake, began in a more, as a pair of workers are attacked by giant bugs, the

earth-shaking battles, and the pair are presented dead. One of the mirrors is discovered alive days later and, in a delicious flashback, tells of seeing a giant bird hatch out of an egg in the deep bowels of the Earth and feed on the bugs.

Before you can say, "Oh, so there goes Tokyo," not one but two giant prehistoric escape to the surface and begin picking off the locals as they fly by at supersonic speeds. The giant reptiles soon work their way to Japan's capital, where the city crumbles before the baroque force winds, generated by their wing power. The army gives it their best shot, which, as much, just isn't good enough. Just when things appear darkest, a volcano erupts, trapping one of the monsters in its fiery breath. As the one giant reptile flutters into a lava flow, the other, not willing to live without its mate, joins in the fiery death.

Roids, shot in color, has never been a critic's favorite but, like the original *Godzilla*, has true strengths.

The early movie sequences are claustrophobic and rather creepy. The acting is better than average. The special effects and the expected miniatures for the city destruction are fairly realistic-looking, and mobile models for the flying reptiles and the bugs are fairly decent. The *Roids*, unlike previous Toho efforts, have no ties to the booth. And the film, despite its sappy sentiment-on-the-mount emotion, is quite dramatic.

The up-and-down quality of Toho's monster invasion took a definite downward spiral in 1958 when Honda went back to the well and came up with *Dinosaur Baron*. The story is standard Toho simplicity. Experiments near a lake bring forth the wrath of a thing that is a cross between *Godzilla* on a bad day and a flying squirrel. The creature flies around, menacing a local village and an airfield (but never goes within stomping distance of Tokyo, thank God) before being blown up by explosives blown in on the main of balloons.

The main-said nature of the film took on an even deeper air of unbelieveability when Crown International picked it up for U.S. release. The film was sent to Japan the unbelievable and a total of 17 minutes (including all of the flying sequences) were cut. What was left was edited and shortened, and—thanks of *Godzilla*—some scenes featuring B-movie star Myron Healy as a navy scientist who did battle with the monster were shot and added.

As much of a goal in *Roids* was, the film deserved brownie points for containing the philosophy of deadly seriousness in all Toho monster efforts. Unfortunately, even that saving grace went by the boards when *Godzilla* came out of retirement in 1962 to do battle with another giant of the silver screen in *Konga Kongu* (or *Gogiri*, better known in America as *King Kong* vs. *Godzilla*). Any sense of seriousness goes out the window as Kong is dragged and flown to Japan with the aid of a balloon. *Godzilla*, meanwhile, emerges from an iceberg and (Surprise!) heads for Japan. Kong and *Godzilla* subsequently engage in some pathetic wrestling matches, throw boulders at each other, ignore the feeble Japanese army, and fill off Mt. Fuji.

Kong appears to was in this one, but parrots were so mad at this big ape in a suit that nobody seemed to care. The film's U.S. premiere in 1963 contained new scenes with American actor Michael Keith that neither helped nor bridged the last part of an exercise. What critics did not count on was the fact that Kong, the biggest-groting Toho film to date. Consequently, the next 12 *Godzilla* efforts between 1964 and 1975 had the same chances in common, more bad monsters, declining special effects quality, and an appeal to kids who weren't too smart. Rather than document each milestone, the titles (Japanese titles in parentheses) should suffice. The rest is up to you.

1964: *Godzilla vs. the Thing (Godzilla Against Monster)*, *Godzilla, the Three-Headed Monster (the same)*, 1965: *Monster Zero (Invaders of the Astro Monsters)*, 1966: *Godzilla vs. the Sea Monster (Ebirah, Horror of the Deep)*, 1967: *Godzilla (the same)*, 1968: *Destroy All Monsters (the same)*, 1969: *God vs. Revenge (the same)*.

1971: *Godzilla vs. the Swamp Monster (Godzilla Against Hellraiser)*, 1972: *Godzilla on Monster Island (Godzilla against Gogiri)*, 1973: *Godzilla vs. Megalon (Godzilla Against Megaron)*, 1974: *Godzilla vs. the Bionic Monster, a.k.a. Godzilla vs. the Cosmic Monster (Godzilla Against Mechagodzilla)*, 1975: *Terror of Godzilla, a.k.a. Terror of Mechagodzilla (Revenge of Mechagodzilla)*.

Godzilla, once again went on an extended vacation in 1975 and would stay out of town until the mid-80's, but the spirit of his finest moments would always remain.

—Excerpted from *When Discovery Ruled the Screen* by Mark Shapiro (Image, \$12.95) USED WITH PERMISSION.



LIVE-ACTION LETTERS

c/o SENTAI, 7272 Wurzbach #204, San Antonio, Tx, 78240-1621

All replies made by Doug Ditts

Dear Ben

I had been eagerly awaiting the first issue of *Sentai* for a while, and for the most part, I wasn't disappointed. There are a few very good features out there covering Godzilla and Ultraman, but it's great to see a regular publication about Japanese sci-fi. If you're interested, here's my opinion on the posts of the magazine *Cosmic Quest*. Paul Rache is quickly becoming the best Godzilla artist out there.

News: It's all current news. Unfortunately, I'd already read about the new '84 Toho Godzilla movie (tentatively entitled *Godzilla 6* or *Godzilla vs. Space Godzilla*), and Allen Cox didn't detect *Thriller* and *Lunar* (that was *Rocky Scott*). Cox did do *Red and Blurry*, though.

Reviews of *Godzilla vs. Mothra* and *Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla*: They were good and accurate, but I didn't like the way they were laid out. The pictures were too small and looked like they were taken off of a TV screen. I think a few good pictures would have been better than a lot of little, blurry ones. And hopefully, in future issues, you can put some behind-the-scenes news on how the movies were made.

Space Giants: I've heard of the show before, but have never seen it... yet. John's article showed his enthusiasm for the program and made me want to track down the episodes on video. I'm looking forward to John's future articles. Maybe he'll write about one of my favorites, *Spacemon*. The monsters were usually lousy, but that Dr. Qian made the show. My only complaint is again how the article was laid out. I would have liked to have seen Guilder and the monsters without words printed over them. I do have one question for John about *Apoia*. What do you know about this show? Was it made by Toho? And when?

Ultraman: The Ultimate Hero: Good article, but again suffering from print over the pictures. And I thought John's comment on Australian music was very unnecessary. Air Supply and Olivia are not Australia's only musical exports, and I don't see what that has to do with Ultraman anyway.

Demonium: Hopefully this was just filler material, because it obviously doesn't belong in *Sentai*. It had nothing to do with Asian sci-fi and was vulgar and tasteless. If you feel the need to include a comic (though I've found most live-action fans are not manga fans at all), it would at least have something to do with the rest of the magazine.

Overall, I enjoyed *Sentai* very much and am looking forward to future issues. It's hard to know what will work and what won't in a new field like this, but you're definitely headed in the right direction!

Mark A. Schultz
Warma, MI

[More negative stuff on "Demonium"—your error, Ben.]
Thanks, Doug. Well, "Demonium" wasn't for everyone, I admit, but I thought it was good.—SD

Dear Mr. Dunn

Hi! I too have long been a huge fan and advocate of Asian science fiction, fantasy, manga, and anime. (By the way, *Myra High School* is an outstanding comic, as is *Magnum*. Please continue to include such high-quality Asian material. Keep up the great work.)

Well now, on to my reason for writing. I just picked up the first collector's issue of *Sentai: The Journal of Asian SF and Fantasy*. I have long awaited a comic/magazine consisting of feature articles, news, and reviews of the genre (live action of Japanese and Asian science fiction and fantasy).

In your editorial in issue #1, you stressed that you needed us (the readers). You need letters of comment, articles, reviews, features, fan art, news letters, rumors, gossip, essays...anything

pertaining to Asian (Japan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Korean, etc.) science fiction and/or fantasy. Well, I volunteer for all of the above!!

I have so much material that I wish to share it with you and my fellow fans of Asian science fiction and fantasy.

Also, I have an idea for a comic that would run through about five or so issues of *Sentai*. It's preliminarily titled "Codename: Raptor PA 6647". It primarily deals with a secret covert government force (consisting of 4 young women) who protect Japan while dealing with giant monsters and alien invasions. Mystery, intrigue, horror, total destruction, romance—this one has it all. Haven't worked out all of the bugs yet, but I have included a few penciled and inked sketches of the main characters and villains and some ideas. Please let me know what you think about it and if it's possible for you to publish it. I look forward to hearing from you. (I have always wanted to submit some stuff for the *Myra High School Yearbooks* and *Sentimental Speeches*, but I never thought it was good enough to see it published.) You never know 'til you try.

Mr. Dunn, I'm here to join the club early and I'm here for the long haul (as I have always been). I wish to include my input into the medium of communication and to truly give you my very best!!

Well, that's all for now. I look forward to hearing from you (and hopefully working with you) very, very soon. Demo artists, Dunn—us! Stay well!

Your friend,
Tony Zsuri
Rochester, NY

Hey, sounds like you've ready and ready to contribute, there, Tony! Well, send in the info so we can see what you've got to share!

I personally can't speak for Ben's opinions on your art, but it looks to me like you've a little work to go yet. This is a internet, not really a place for art critiques, so I won't go into details. I'd just advise that you work a bit more on head-to-body proportions, facial structure, and designing fun, or, funnier-looking characters. Also, experiment with drawing instruments and materials to vary your line width and such. When you have some completed samples of your story (fully inked comic pages) send 'em in and we'll take a look!—DWD

Ben Dunn

It is truly unfortunate that they canceled *Ultraman*. Not only was this show poorly scheduled and virtually under-rated, but the viewership was greatly under-estimated. Worse, by the time the show was announced on the Japanese sci-fi subculture media, the show was cancelled. We need to rally support for this and other shows from Japan through the fan network. TNT's address is:

Turner Network Television
Viewer Mail Dept.
1000 Peachwood Drive
Atlanta, GA 30308

I picked up two copies of *Sentai* and was very pleased with both the format and content. If a subscription becomes available, I will sign up. There are few sources for science and accurate info regarding these genres, and a serious U S television has a blind attitude toward sci-fi, especially that from Japan. Thank you for *Sentai*.

Sincerely,
Paul K. Gorman
Akron, OH

That cancellation must've hit you pretty hard, Rick, considering you called Ben "Rob"! (Don't worry, you got it right on the envelope, so we forgive you!) That is a shame, though. U.S. television's misunderstanding of SF & fantasy shows in general is pretty legendary. Thankfully, there's the Sci-Fi Channel (in some areas of the country, anyway), but I hear they haven't quite picked up on any of this stuff yet.

Oh, and you're most welcome.—DWD

Ben:

I just received *Sentai* #1 and I am looking forward to #2. I am an avid fan of *Godzilla/Gamera* movies. I saw *Godzilla vs. Mothra* about 6 months ago. I haven't seen *Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla* (the new ones) yet. Can you tell me if they are available and where I would get or rent them? I would also like to know how long does it take to get to America after it is released in Japan? (I mean the *Godzilla/Gamera* movies).

I am 25 years old. I've been into these kinds of movies since I was 5. I think I've seen all the *Godzilla*, *Gamera*, and even Japanese King Kong movies. Can you give me a list of all American-released *Gamera/Godzilla* movies? This is to be sure I haven't missed any.

Thanks very much,
Rick Santillo
Wallingford, CT

*The answer to your first question may be in a couple of the letters below, Rick. As for lag time for a movie coming over here from Japan, it varies. The first *Godzilla* movie took about a year. *Battlestar* took a little longer because of disputes with the first bidder to be American distributor. How long any upcoming importations take is up to Toho and the people they're dealing with.*

*Lots of the *Godzilla & Gamera* films may be forthcoming as part of future articles. In the meantime, though, any of you out there reading this have the info Rick needs!—DWD*

Hi:

I was just wondering if you could tell me where I can send for copies of *Godzilla vs. Mothra* (new one) and *Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla* (new one)?

Were there any other releases of the *Godzilla* movies? Also, where can I purchase the *Godzilla* movie posters?

Scott Shickles
Hempden, NJ

Funny you should ask, Scott...—DWD

Dear Mr. Damer:

I was very happy to see *Sentai*. I grew up with *Space Giant* and *Godzilla*, and I am still a big fan of Japanese live-action SF.

I loved *Sentai* news—thanks for the tip about *Wingsmen*!—especially the article on *Space Giant*. I didn't care for the comic in the back too much.

There aren't a lot of people who enjoy seeing Japanese men jump around in rubber suits, so we need to stick together. When I live, it is hard to get a hold of these shows (we didn't even get *Ultraman: Towards the Future*). I have a collection of live-action movies and shows and I love to trade videos with other collectors. Here's an idea for *Sentai*: Why not have a page of *Sentai* out made for people looking to trade videos? I don't want to start a club or organization, just get people who are interested in Asian SF together.

As for contributions, I don't have time for much more than this letter now. I'll try to send something this summer.

Thanks,
Andy Strawn
Springfield, MO

*You've got
some in your
suggestion, Andy.
Send in...—DWD*

Ben and *Sentai* stuff:

Hello, I just thought I would write in and give praise for a fine first issue. I also have a suggestion. In addition to articles and reviews, how about doing a page linking people that like to trade Asian films. As you may or may not know, there are tons of people that trade foreign films through the mail with other collectors. I've recently just started doing so myself. In case anyone on the staff is interested, I have quite a number of unusual films to trade. Most are from Hong Kong and many come off fantastic. If you or anyone is interested in my list then please write back. I'm sure that a readers' page would really boost your sales.

I recently saw a

fantastic on the music and FX production of *Mechagodzilla*. It looks really good and I can't wait to see it. The documentary really got me in a *Godzilla* mood, so I went out and rented the *Ghostbusters* laserdisc. I've also seen *Mothra*, but in an unattended version. Anyways, there's this great store I go to that has lots of Hong Kong films on tape and disc. There's some Japanese stuff in well. You probably wouldn't be interested in trading Asian or Euro films, let me know. Also, let me know about the HK fantasy films (*Zu, Chinese Ghost Story, Iron Monkey, Moon Warriors*, and much more). Thanks, and keep up the good work.

Tony Robinson
Tacoma, WA



Art by Jeff Cohen

Actually, Tony, a number of us here are not only into such flights of fantasy as Chinese Ghost Story, but films like Police Story and Magic Cop as well. (We're still working on locating and finding time to view more of the Mr. Vampire series of films.)

As for the tape readers' page, we're way ahead of you! If you've seen issue 2 by now, then you already know that we've solicited our readers to send in ads for a Classified Ad page like the one we have in Mongoose. This would include ads from potential tape readers such as you and Andy. It'd only go in there if we got the ads to fill it, though, so read 'em in! —DWD

Dear Sam:

I'm a real big fan of Godzilla. I have all his movies from the 1950's to the 1990's. I heard that Tri-Star is making their own American movie of Godzilla and I was hoping I would like to be in that movie and I have been trying to get a hold of them.

I have been looking for their address almost a year. If you can please give me their address or Alex Cox's address so I could ask them if I could be in their new Godzilla movie, it would mean a lot to me.

Please write back to me as soon as you can for your answer. Thank you for your time. Keep up the good work. I can't wait to get the next Sensei comic book.

Truly Yours,
James R. Gorman, Jr.
Schenelecty, NY

Well, James, if the addresses you need are publicly available (I'm sure Tri-Star's is; I don't know about Mr. Cox's), AFK! Information in Hollywood should have them. Feeling that, you can always try your local university library and see if they can acquire an L.A. or Hollywood phone book for you to look through.

I wouldn't get your hopes up though. To have any sort of big role in a film, I'm pretty sure you have to be a member of the Screen Actors' Guild. It's possible you could get in as an extra, but are you really willing and able to go to the expense of traveling all the way to California? Well, whatever happens, good luck in your inquiry! —DWD

Dear Mr. Davis:

I'm very proud of you for making Sensei. That magazine looks butt!! I like the first Sensei. Hey, Ben Davis, you're cool! You give all the information about new Godzilla films, like on Godzilla vs. Megagodzilla (1994). I never knew that Rodan was in it! Hey! In your next issue of this marvelous magazine, why not do Japanese science fiction toys? I also know now that they're making an American Godzilla movie and American Ultraman TV series!

I also like the artwork in this wonderful book. And when do you think Toho will release those new Godzilla movies? I wonder how you got all that information. Well, I guess you're gonna put that in your cool magazine. I hope you'll write back too.

Sincerely Yours,
David Salzman, age 12
Phoenix, AZ

Ah, we're corrupting 'em younger and younger... Glad you liked the issue, David! I don't know whether the U.S.-produced Ultraman series will be on TV here or go straight to video, though. Heck, the people involved aren't even sure when it'll get released here, period! An article on the toy merchandising sounds pretty neat, and I'm sure someone out there's already even putting one together for us right now! (hint, hint) As for U.S. release dates of the newer Godzilla films, see my reply

to Rick Santillo above. We'll report 'em as we find 'em out. —DWD

There were a lot more letters but this is all the space we have for now. I'll run the rest next issue. Keep them coming!



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